



## Correct authorship of the genus *Pyrgilauda* (Aves: Passeridae)

JIŘÍ MLÍKOVSKÝ

Department of Zoology, National Museum, Václavské náměstí 68, CZ-115 79 Praha 1, Czechia. E-mail: [jiri\\_mlikovsky@nm.cz](mailto:jiri_mlikovsky@nm.cz)

The correct generic name and its authorship of southern snowfinches has been a matter of debate since the 1980s (Kašín 1982; Nejšel'dt 1986; Stepanán 1990) until Mlíkovský (1998) showed that *Pyrgilauda* is the correct generic name and that it should be attributed to Bonaparte (1850: 511), not to Verreaux (1871: 40), because Bonaparte (1850: 511) first listed that name in synonymy, because it was used as a valid name for a taxon before 1961 and because Art. 11.6.1 of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (ICZN 1999; hereafter the Code) applies to this case (in 1998 I referred to the then-valid Third Edition of the Code, ICZN 1985, where this Article was called "11/e").

Gregory & Dickinson (2012: 53–54) agreed that *Pyrgilauda* is the correct generic name for southern snowfinches, but argued that *Pyrgilauda* should be attributed to Verreaux (1871), because Art. 11.6.1 of the Code does not apply. This prompted me to restudy the case. As I show below, one of the two arguments used by Gregory & Dickinson (2003) is not in agreement with the Code (ICZN 1999) and the other one is incorrect.

First, Gregory & Dickinson (2012) argued that Art. 11.6.1 of the Code can apply only if the name first listed in synonymy is subsequently used in the same sense. However, the Code does not require this. This is wise, because it is impossible to understand from a name not associated with description or indication first listed in synonymy in which sense its actual creator intended to use it. The author who listed it in synonymy may have used it in the same meaning as its actual creator or in another sense. Thus, the condition added by Gregory & Dickinson (2012) to the Code could never be fulfilled.

As regards genus-group names, Art. 11.6.1 of the Code refers for their type species to Art. 67.12 of the Code. There it is explicitly said that “the type species of the nominal genus or subgenus first published as a synonym is that nominal species (cited by an available name) first directly associated with it” (ICZN 1999: 69). The Example attached to Art. 67.12 of the Code explicitly says “The type species of *Ceratopogon* [used as valid by Meigen 1818: 82] is not automatically the type of either *Palpomyia* or *Forcipomyia* [both first cited in the synonymy of *Ceratopogon* by Meigen 1818: 82 and 73, respectively].” The taxonomic meaning of nominal genera is fixed (“provides the objective standard of reference for the application of the name it bears”) by their type species (Art. 61 of the Code) and the provisions of the Code thus mean that generic names validated under Art. 11.6.1 of the Code can be used in a different meaning than the generic name in the synonymy of which they were first cited (*contra* Gregory & Dickinson 2012). This is supported by the Example attached to Art. 11.6.1 of the Code: the generic names *Ceratopogon* Meigen, 1818 (used as valid by Meigen 1818: 70–86) and *Palpomyia* Meigen, 1818 (validated from Meigen 1818: 82 under Art. 11.6.1 of the Code) have different type species and are in current use for different groups of flies (Insecta: Diptera) (e.g. Borkent 2012).

Second, Gregory & Dickinson (2012) argued that Verreaux (in Bonaparte 1850) used the name *Pyrgilauda* for a lark (Aves: Alaudidae), while he later (Verreaux 1871) used it for a snowfinch (Aves: Passeridae). They said “Verreaux named a new snow-finch, not a lark, i.e., he did not ‘adopt’ Bonaparte’s name and the potential availability ceased when Verreaux used it in a wholly different context” (Gregory & Dickinson 2012: 54). Thus, based on this incorrect assumption (see below), Gregory & Dickinson (2012) suggested in fact that Verreaux created the generic name twice: first for a lark and later for a finch. However, Gregory & Dickinson (2012) seem to have overlooked the fact that the systematics of finch-like songbirds have evolved considerably between Bonaparte’s/Verreaux’s and modern times.

Bonaparte (1850: 511) listed *Pyrgilauda* in the synonymy of *Pyrrhulauda* “Smith, 1829” [= Swainson 1837: 294], which was itself later synonymized with the older *Eremopterix* Kaup (1836: 139). Verreaux’s *Pyrgilauda* was created as a combination of *Pyrgita* (sparrow) and *Alauda* (lark), thus meaning sparrow-lark, while Smith’s *Pyrrhulauda* was created as a combination of *Pyrrhula* (bullfinch) and *Alauda* (lark), thus meaning bullfinch-lark. Whatever the reason an author lists a manuscript or label name in the synonymy of a generic name he or she used as valid, it has no bearing upon the availability and taxonomic meaning of the name first listed in the synonymy (Art. 11.6.1 and Art. 67.12 of the Code).

Birds of the genus *Eremopterix*, now known to be larks (Aves: Alaudidae), were classified as finches in the mid-19<sup>th</sup>

century (e.g. Bonaparte 1850: 511; see also Layard 1867: 208), not as larks as incorrectly said by Gregory & Dickinson (2012). Later, snowfinches (genus *Pyrgilauda*; see Bianki 1909 and Mayr 1927) were believed to be closely related to the birds now usually separated in the genera *Montifringilla* C.L. Brehm (1828: col. 1277) and *Leucosticte* Swainson (in Swainson & Richardson 1832: 265, 493) (e.g. Sharpe 1888: 257–279; Dresser 1902: 297–306; Hartert 1904: 131–141). Still later, *Leucosticte* was confirmed as a finch (Aves: Fringillidae), while *Montifringilla* and *Pyrgilauda* were recognized as sparrows (Aves: Ploceidae or Passeridae, depending on the classification) (Suškin 1924, 1927; Sudilovskaâ 1954; Vaurie 1959; and many subsequent authors).

I conclude that there is no evidence that Verreaux created the generic name *Pyrgilauda* twice and that Art. 11.6.1 of the Code must be used for solving the authorship of the generic name *Pyrgilauda* (*contra* Gregory & Dickinson 2012). *Pyrgilauda* thus should be attributed to Bonaparte (1850), not to Verreaux (1871), as already contended by Mlíkovský (1998).

Of necessity, I follow here the provisions of the Code (ICZN 1999), although I consider the statement regarding the authorship of the names validated from synonymy under Art. 11.6.1 of the Code unfortunate. It would be much better to attribute names first listed in synonymy to persons to whom they were credited and who probably created them, not to persons who, by citing them in synonymy implicitly did not recognize them. Thus, my choice would be “*Pyrgilauda* Verreaux in Bonaparte, 1850”, not “*Pyrgilauda* Bonaparte, 1850”. However, the Code does not allow this solution.

## Acknowledgments

The preparation of this paper was supported by the project DKRVO 2014/15 of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic.

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